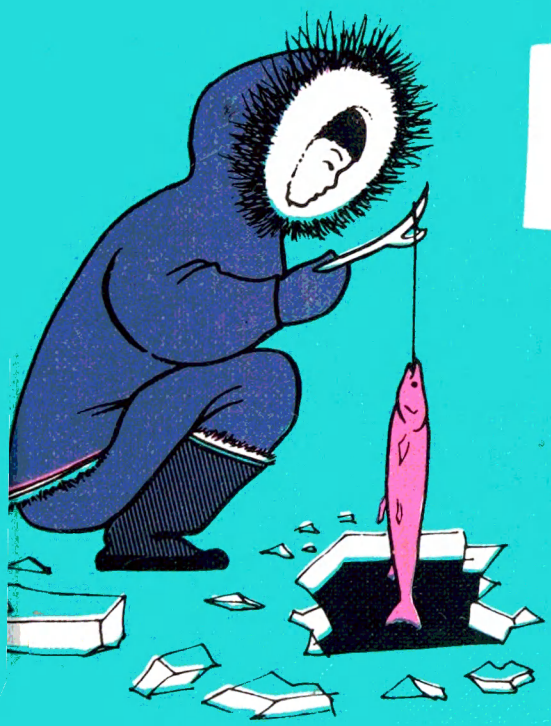
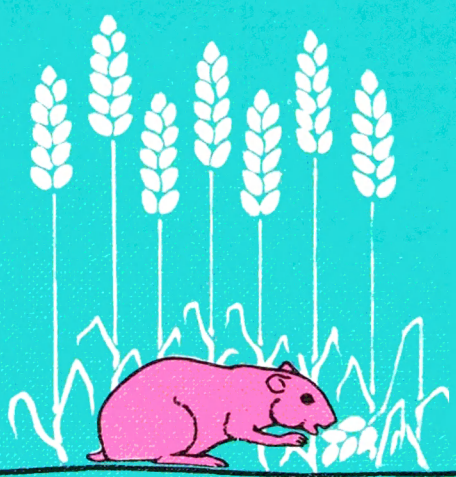
MANY FOODS



By MARIE NEURATH



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Many Foods

by

Marie Neurath

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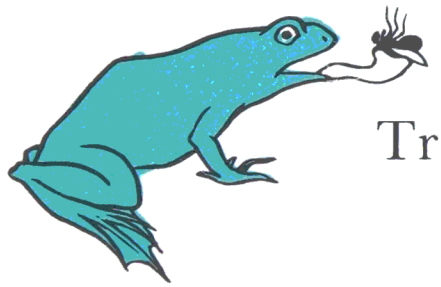

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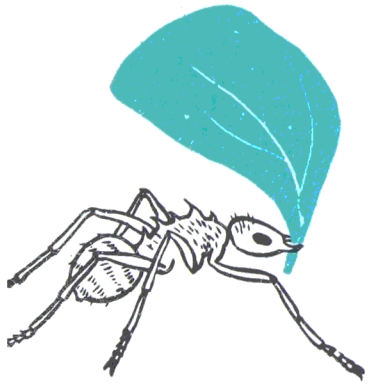

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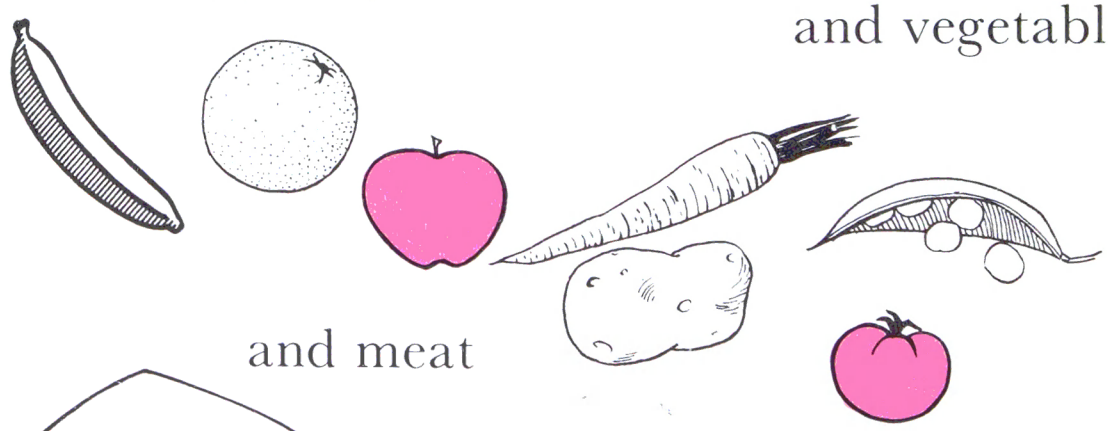
Bill of Fare

How many different things we like to eat!

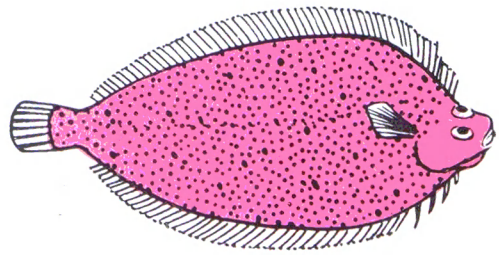
Babies drink only milk,
but they soon have to
learn to like other
things besides.

On milk alone they cannot grow bone or muscle
or become healthy and strong.
All of us, young and old, need fruit
and vegetables

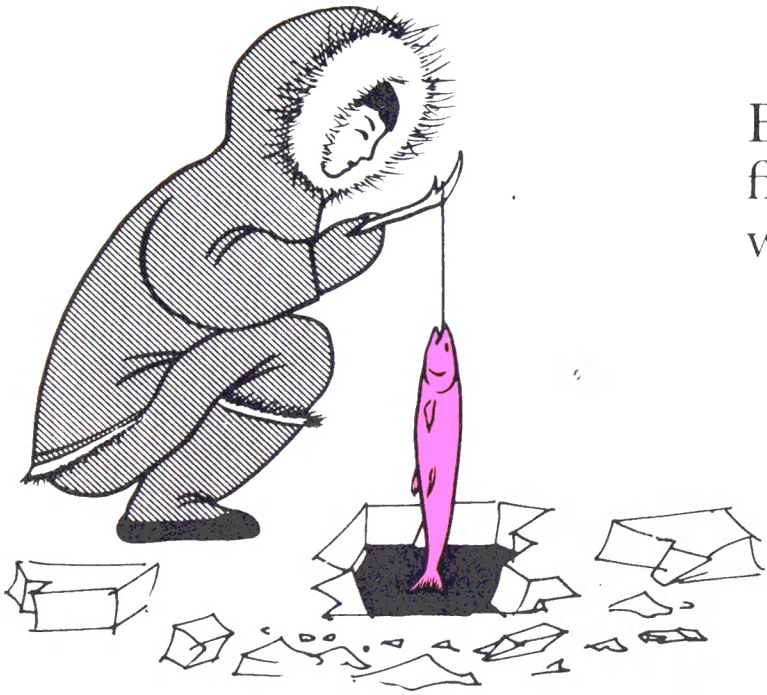


and meat

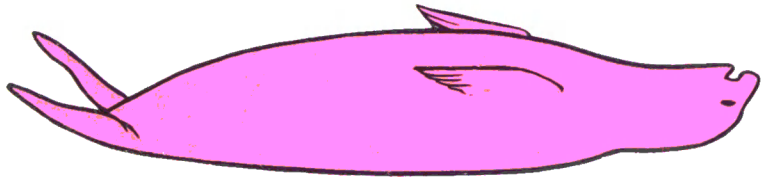
and fish . . .



But not everybody in the world
eats all of these things.

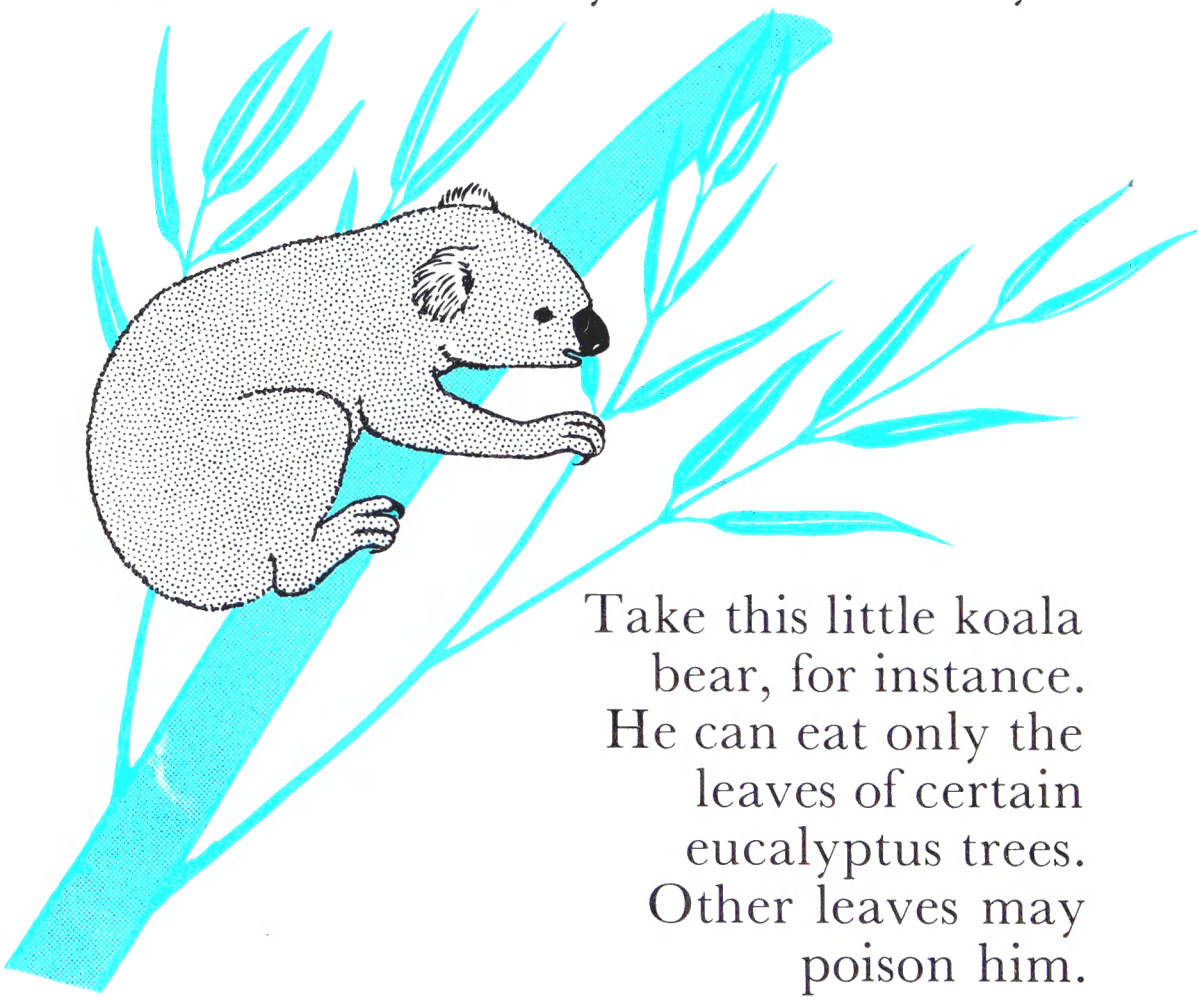


Eskimos eat only
fish and meat
with a lot of fat.



They may eat a few roots and berries in summer
time, but they never taste sugar or bake bread.

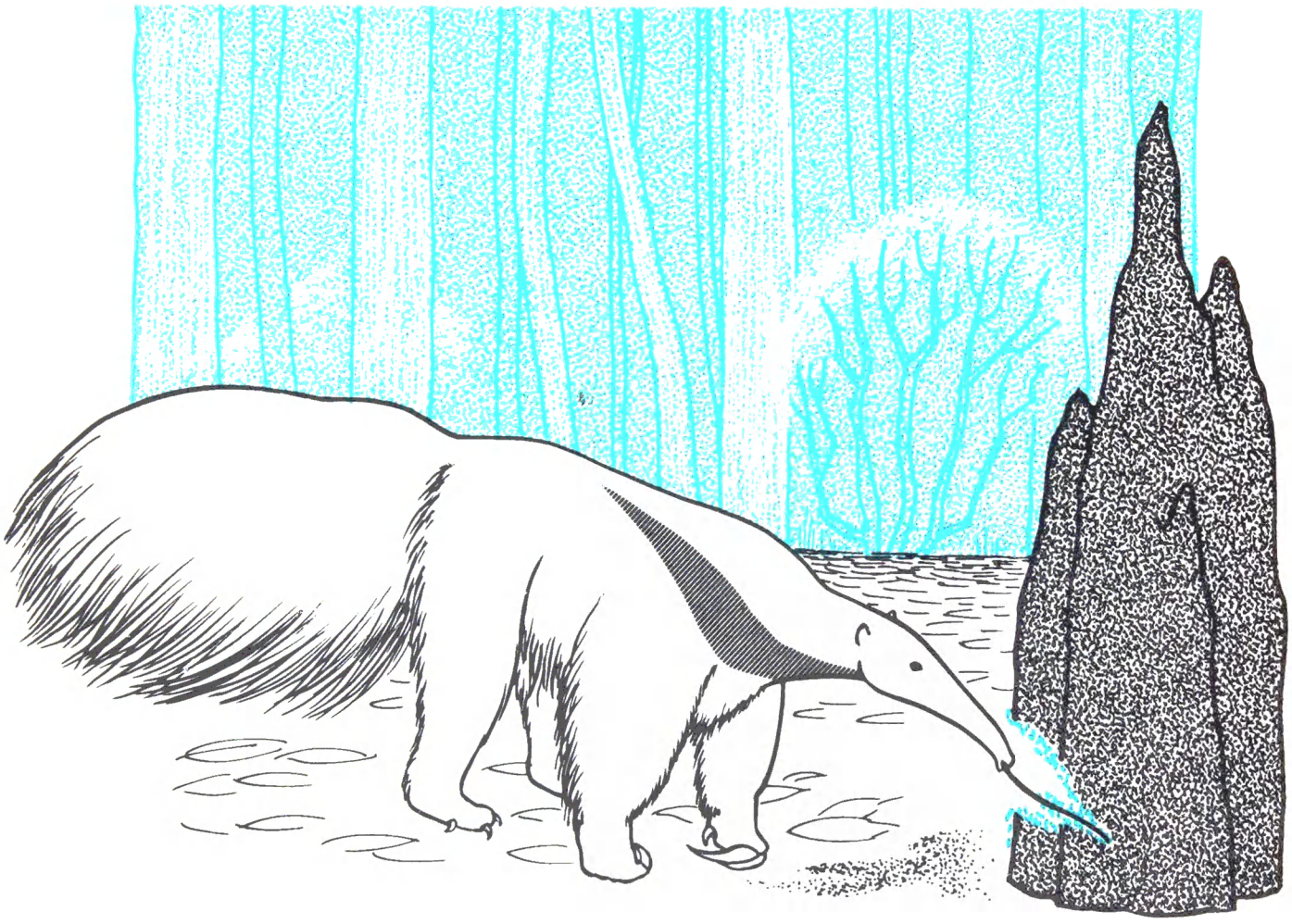
Man, in general, is not very fussy.
He gets used to all sorts of meals.
Wild animals are usually much more fussy.



Take this little koala bear, for instance. He can eat only the leaves of certain eucalyptus trees. Other leaves may poison him.

The giant pandas eat only bamboo shoots. What will happen to them if their food supply disappears? If they cannot change their ways they will certainly starve.

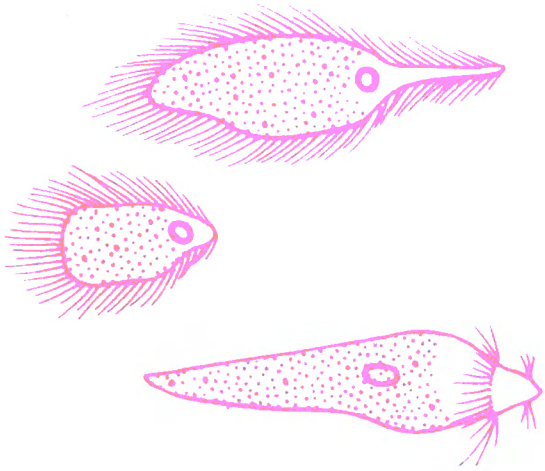
This giant ant-eater is pretty fussy too.
He eats nothing but white ants (termites).



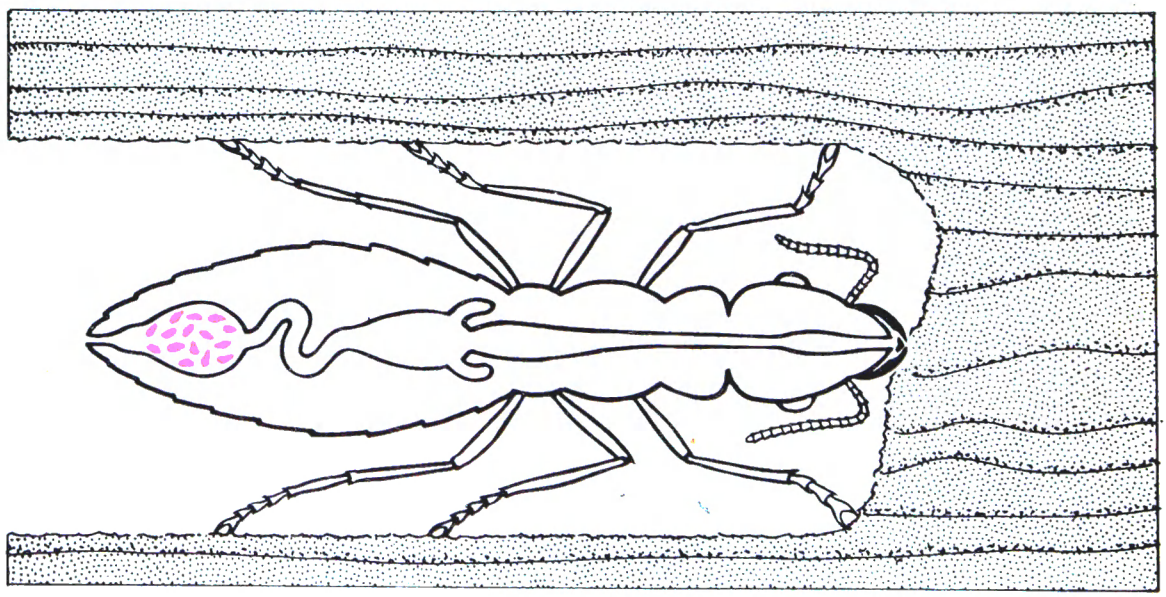
Look at the long tube-like snout
which he uses for poking into ant-hills.
His sticky tongue is even longer than his snout.
Out it comes, below his snout,
to whip up the ants.

Eat wood?

Well, *we* can't, but some termites can.



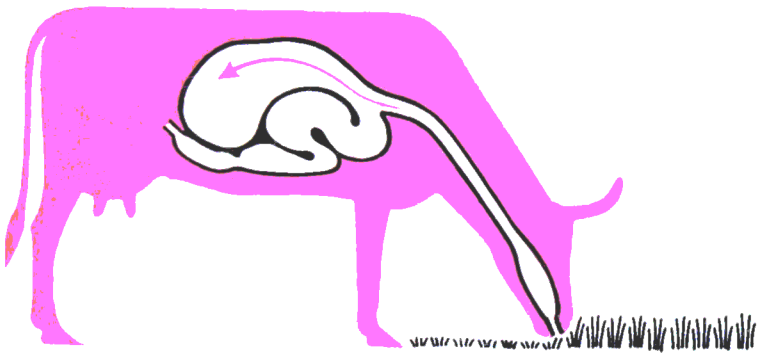
Tiny animals live in the body of the termite and digest the wood which he eats.



They would die without the termite and the termite would certainly die without them.

Eat grass!

Well, the cow swallows grass
almost unchewed.

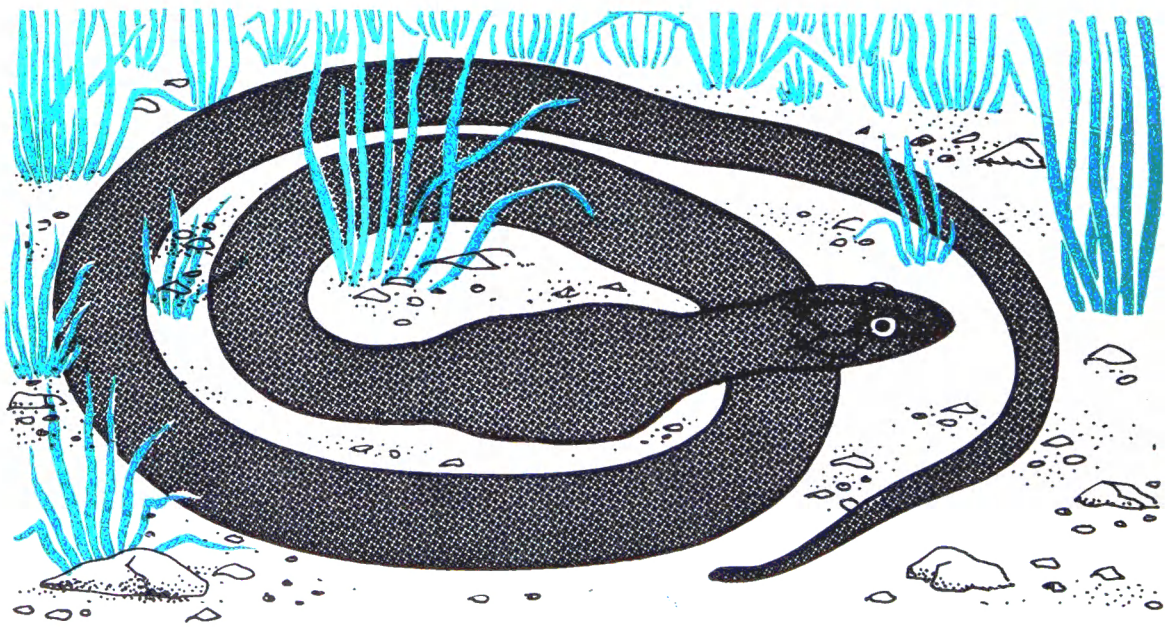


Then she finds a
quiet spot and
brings it all
up again.
Only then does
she chew her
food properly.

Only then does it
go down to her
proper stomach
where digestion
can begin in
earnest.

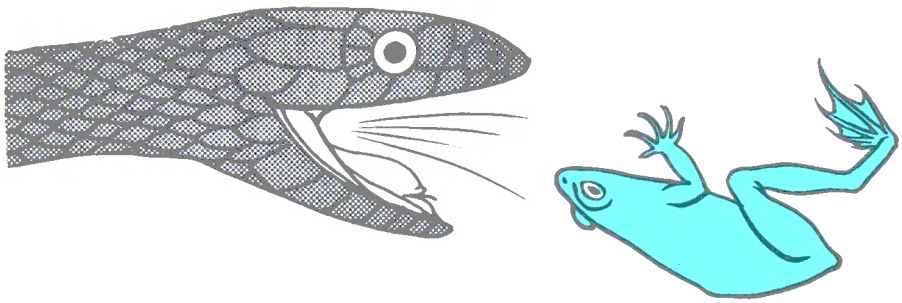
Digestion *is* a complicated business.
There is so much to be done before the food becomes a liquid that can be carried about in your blood. First there is chewing.

If you have no teeth, digesting your food can take a very long time, especially if you swallow it whole – skin, bones and all –
as a snake does.

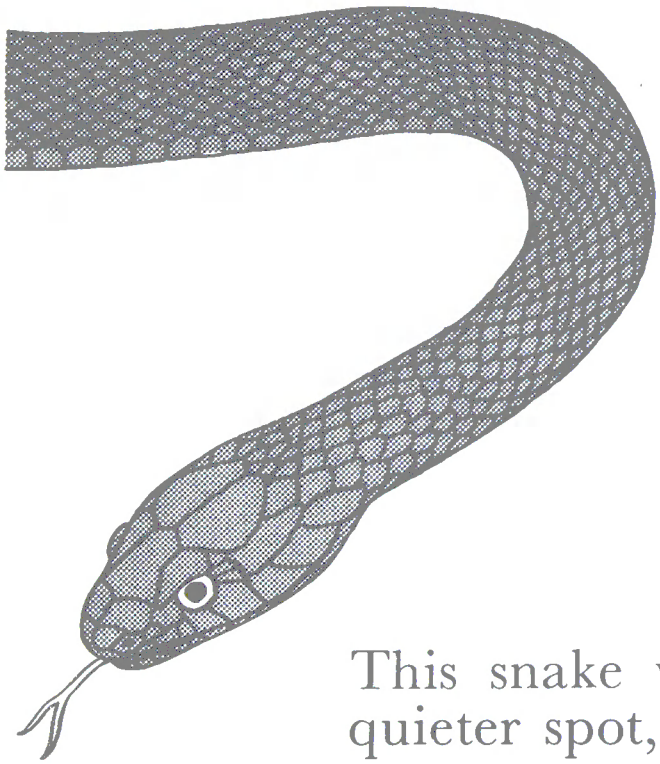


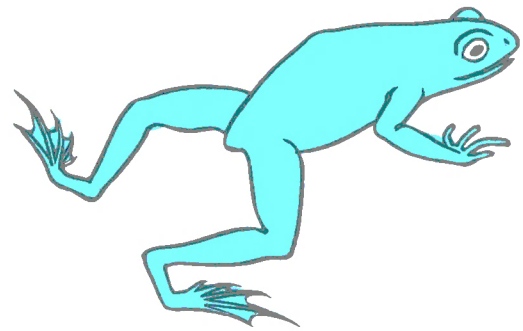
No wonder a snake eats but once a week.
It takes him that long to digest such a meal.

What's this?



Our grass snake has been disturbed by a dog and has brought up his dinner alive and well.

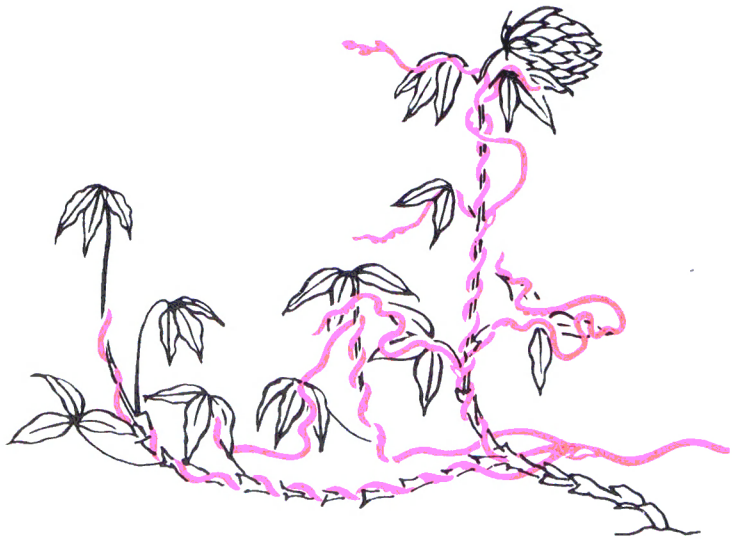




The frog is hopping away as fast as he can.

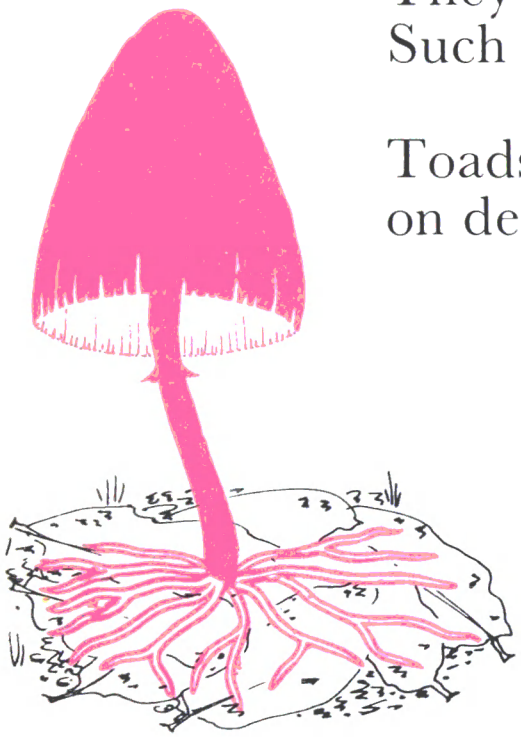
This snake will have to find a quieter spot, next time.

Only *green* plants can make their own food. The clover in our picture has roots and green leaves which make liquid food for the whole plant. It does not have to digest food. Nor does the vine twining around the clover. The vine has no roots. It has no leaves. It cannot make food for itself. Through its little suckers, it draws out the food the clover has made for itself. The clover may die. If it does, the little vine will reach out and find another stem to feed and support it.

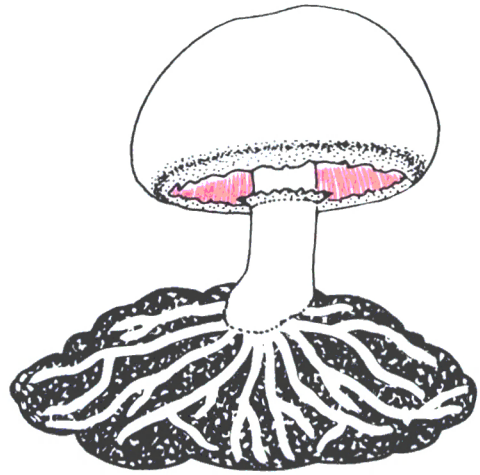


Some plants must digest their food.
They have no green leaves
and cannot make liquid food for themselves.
They live on ready-made food.
Such plants are called fungi.

Toadstools are fungi. They live on dead leaves and twigs.



Mushrooms are fungi.
They live on
animal droppings.



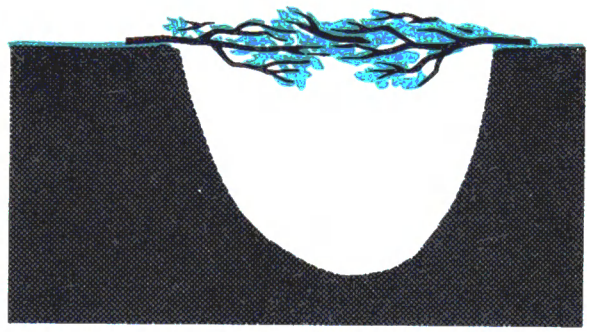
Fungi have branching threads. These threads penetrate sodden leaves or droppings, and help to digest them. They then suck in the liquid food they have made all around them. Fungi clear up some of the mess that animals and plants leave behind.

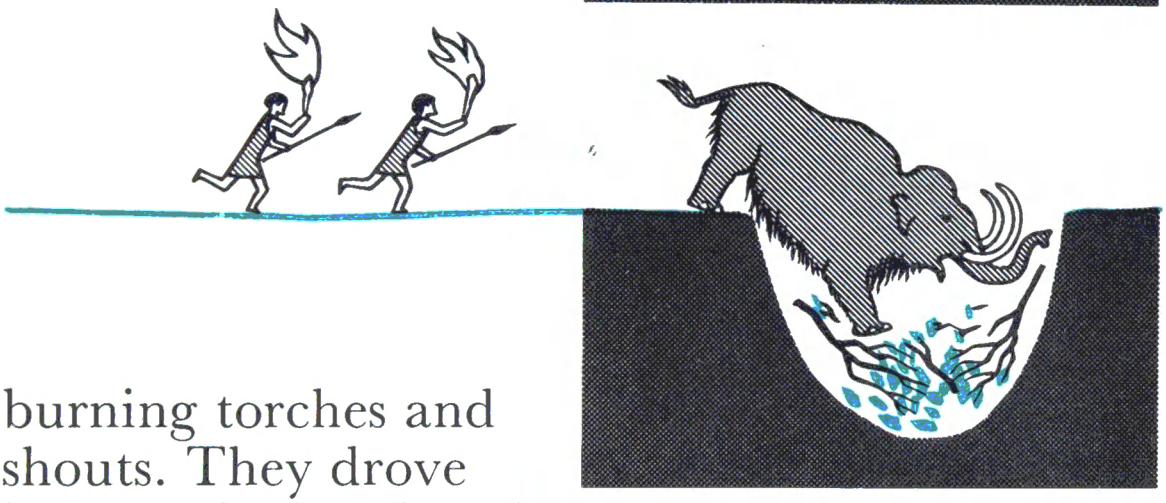
Trapping and Hunting

At first, men lived like animals – hunting and foraging for fruits, seeds and roots.

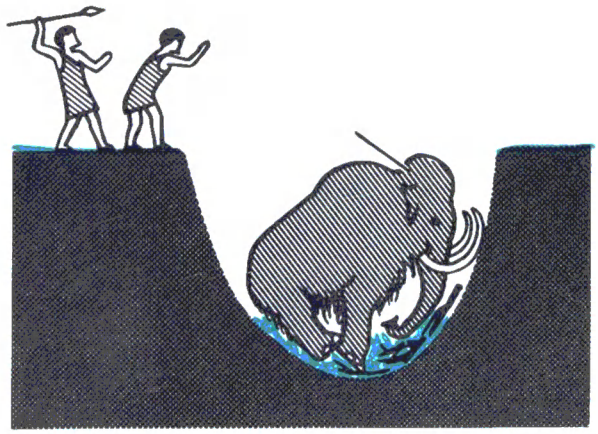
The bigger the game, the better they liked it, for they could live on it for weeks. How did primitive people without guns manage to kill an animal so fierce and large as a mammoth?

One way was to make a trap.
They dug a deep pit
and covered it with
branches.
They watched the
animal approaching
and frightened it with



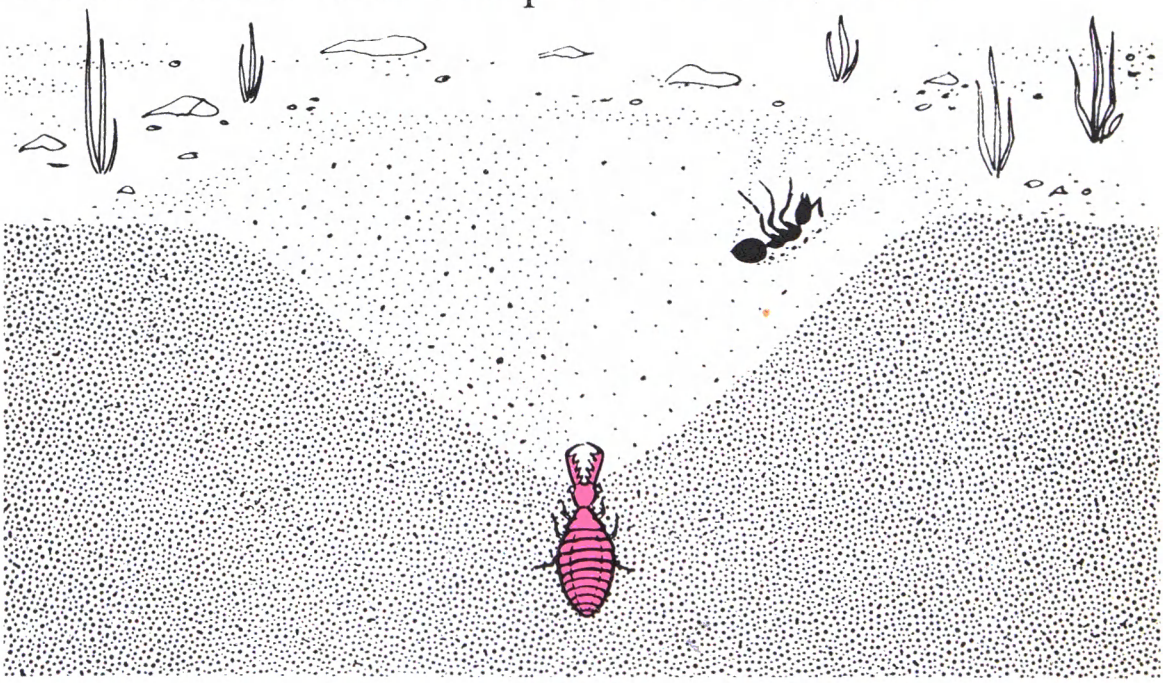


burning torches and
shouts. They drove
it towards the pit. The
beast crashed through
the branches and fell
to the bottom of the
pit. The weakest man
could then kill it.



The ant-lion is a
curious insect that
lives in France.

When he is still a grub he traps his prey.
He makes a round pit in fine, dry sand.
At the bottom of the pit he lies in wait.

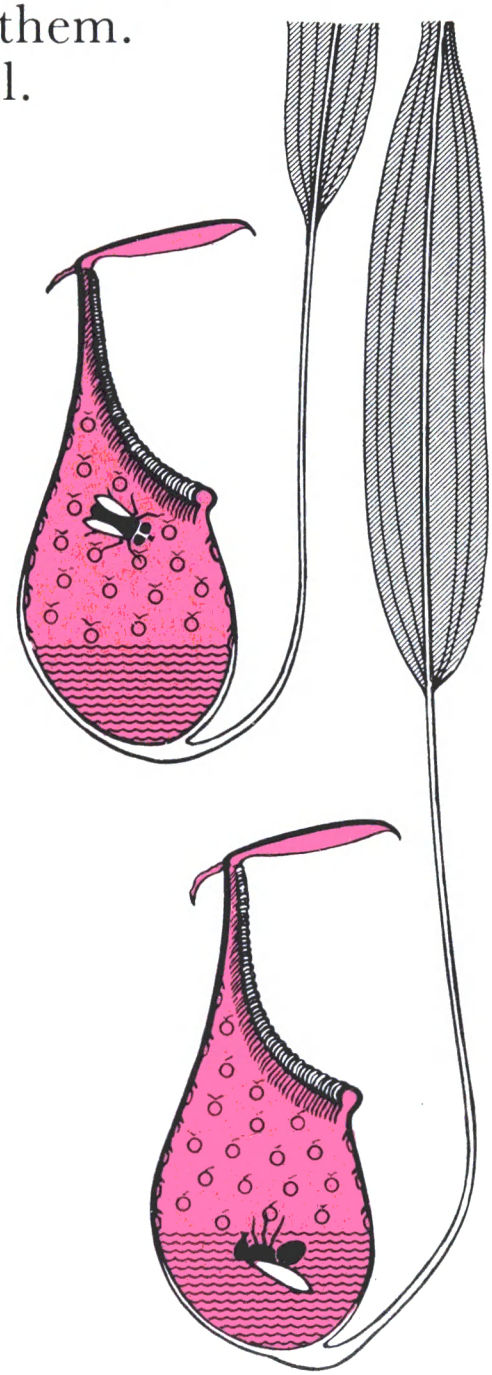


A tiny ant has fallen over the edge!
Down, down it falls towards the hungry grub.
One snap of his jaws and the ant is caught.

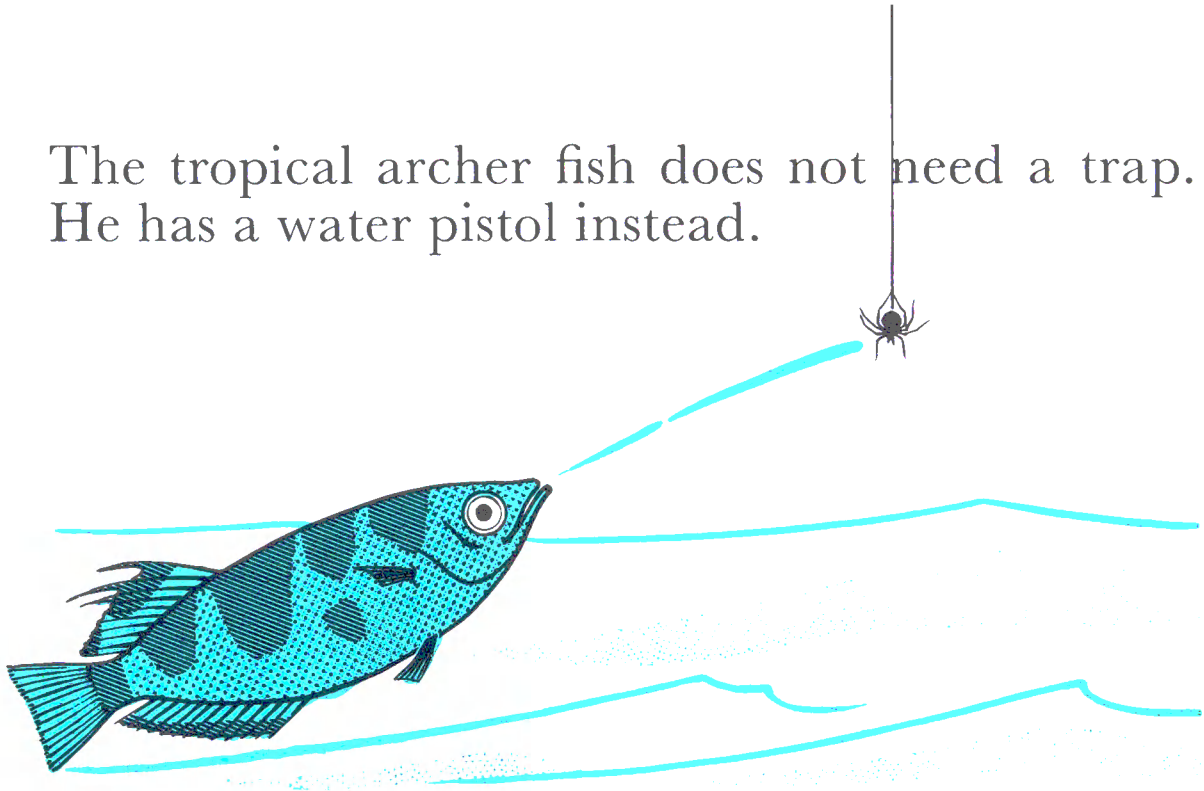
Certain plants can trap and "eat" insects.
This strange plant is one of them.
It lives in a terribly poor soil.

A fly has crawled into the pot-shaped leaf that looks like a flower. He found nectar on the rim and is looking for more inside.
When he tries to get out he finds that the wall is slippery and hard to climb.
Struggling, he falls and is drowned in the fluid that fills the bottom of the leaf.

Soon he will be turned into a liquid which the plant will suck in from its pot.



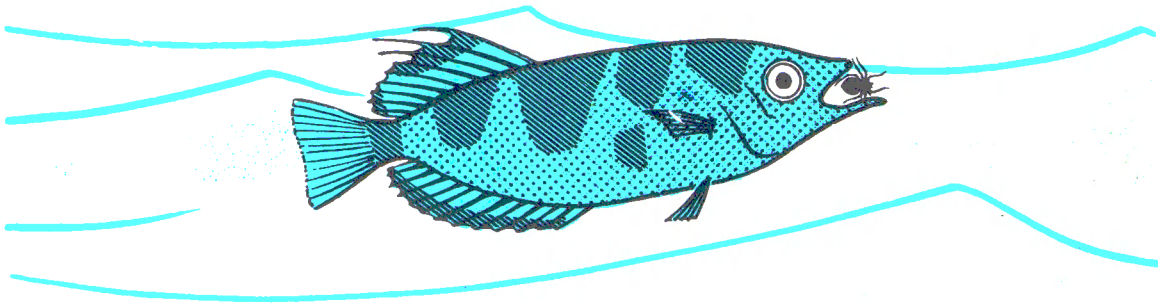
The tropical archer fish does not need a trap.
He has a water pistol instead.



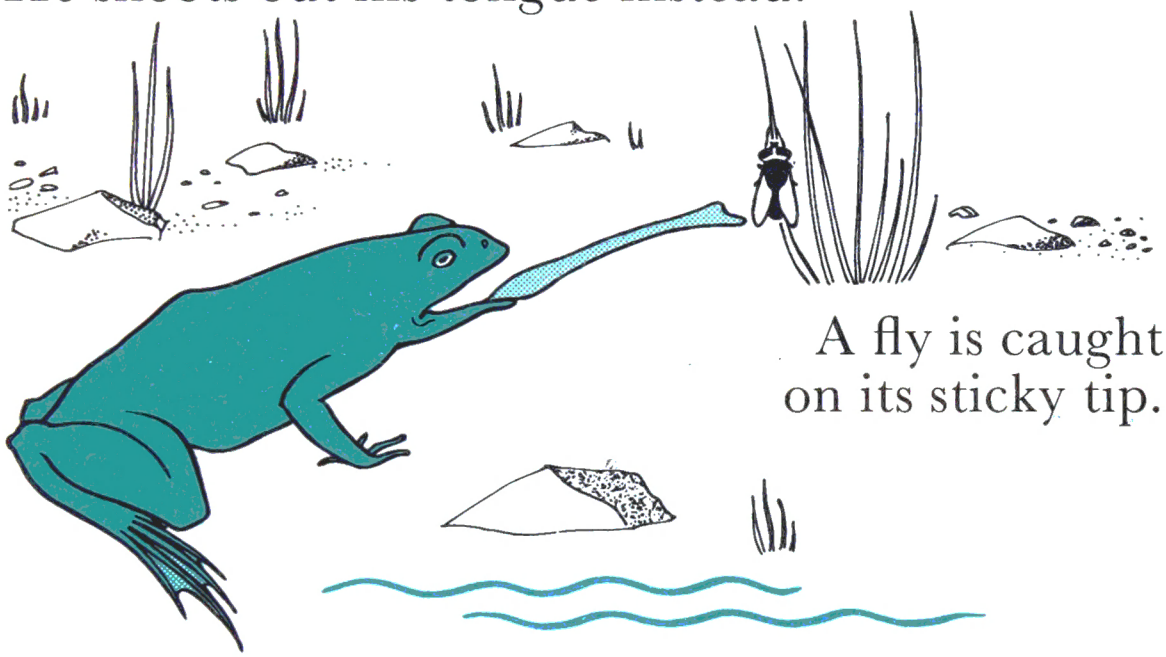
When a spider comes near –
swish! He shoots out drops of water.

And down comes the spider into the water.

Now the fish is gobbling it up.



The frog does not shoot out drops of water.
He shoots out his tongue instead.

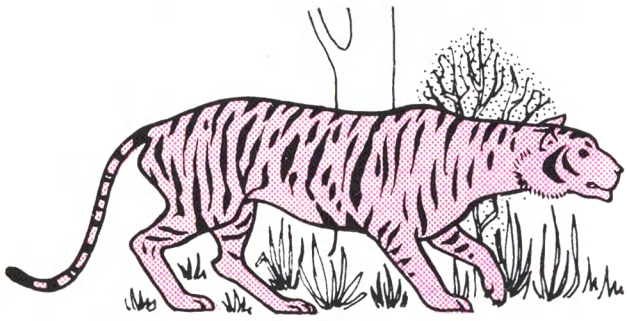


A fly is caught
on its sticky tip.

A backward flip of the tongue –

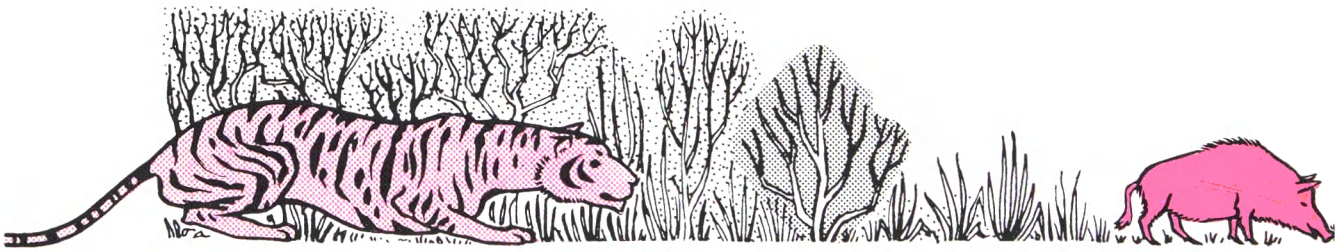
and the fly
is inside the
frog's mouth!

The tiger treads softly, silently



one
step
at a
time.

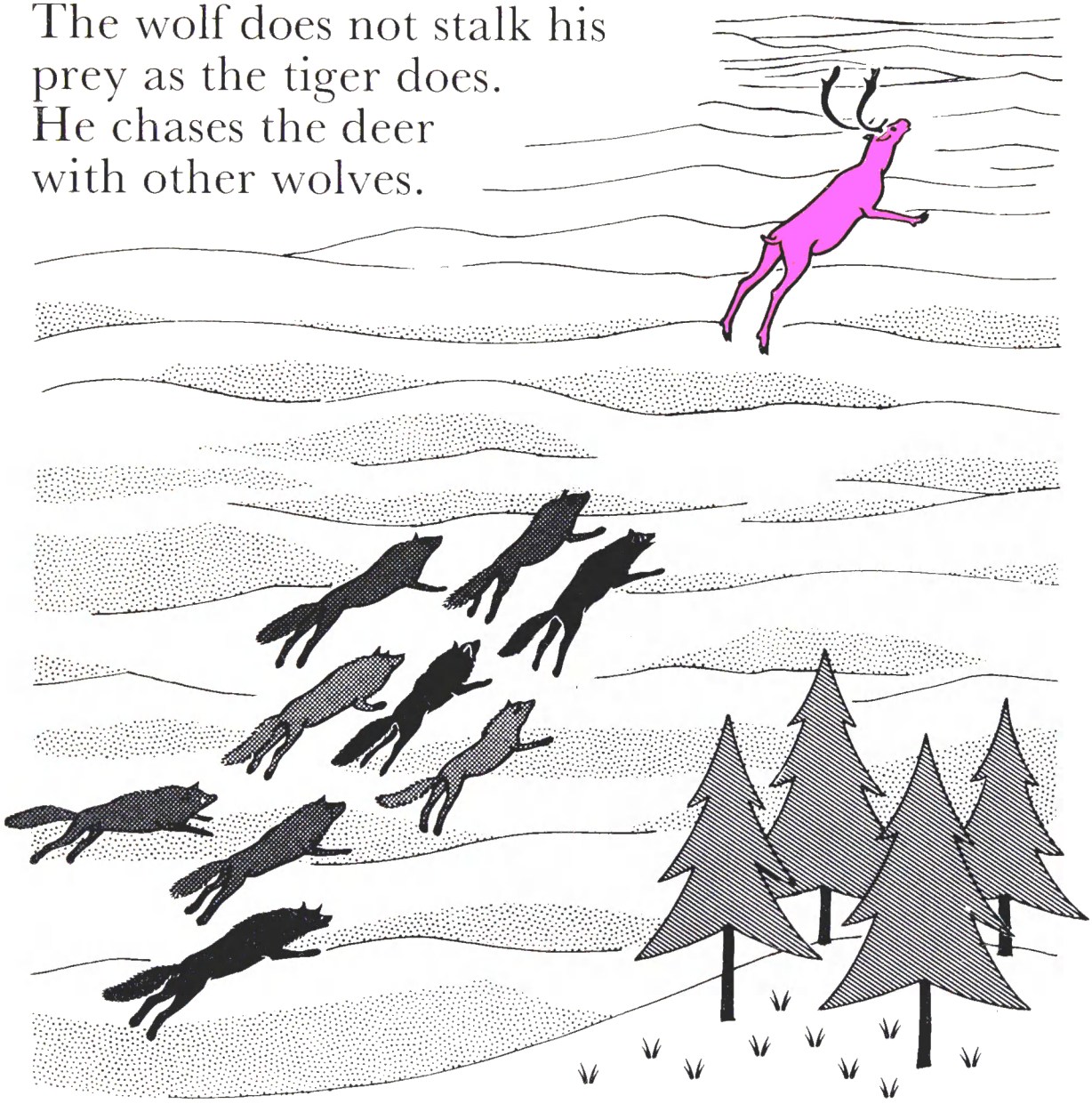
He smells a wild pig.



Now he is within striking distance.
Now he crouches and springs like a cat.

It's all up with the pig!

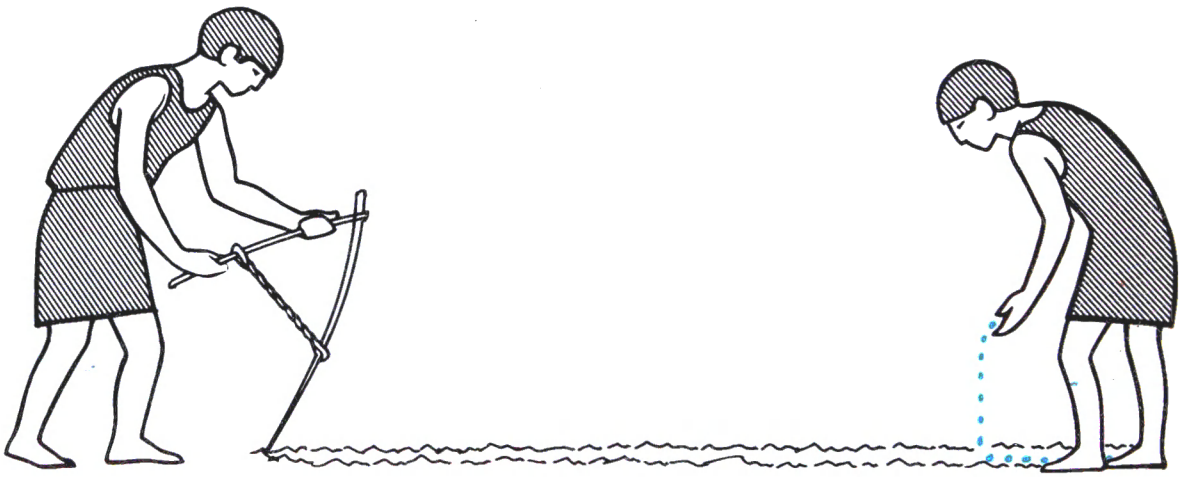
The wolf does not stalk his prey as the tiger does. He chases the deer with other wolves.



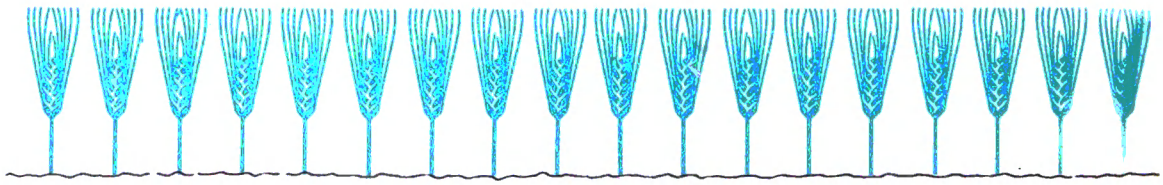
For miles they chase the deer over the plain. The deer is exhausted. He begins to stumble. Then the wolves set upon him.

Farming and Preserving

Thousands of years ago, it was discovered that seeds dropped by chance grew into plants.

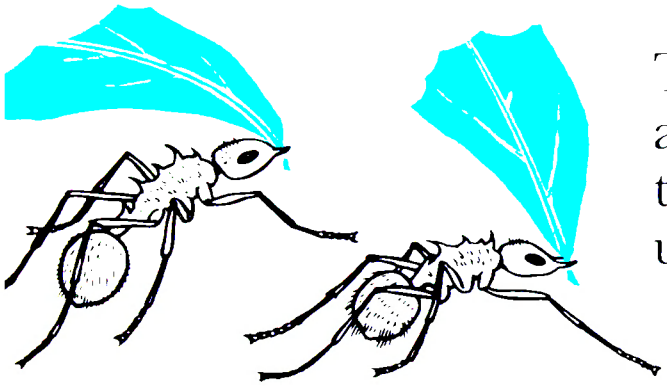


After that, people began to drop seeds on purpose and became farmers. They scratched and stirred the soil with a stick. In the furrows, they sowed barley and other grains.



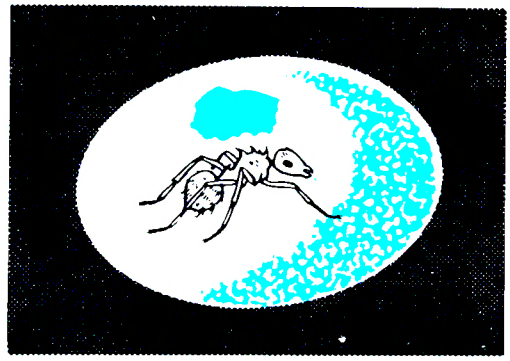
Later on, they planted vegetables, and fruit trees such as the apple, the olive and the fig.

Is man the only farmer in the world?
Not at all. Certain ants that live in the tropics are farmers. These ants grow fungi.

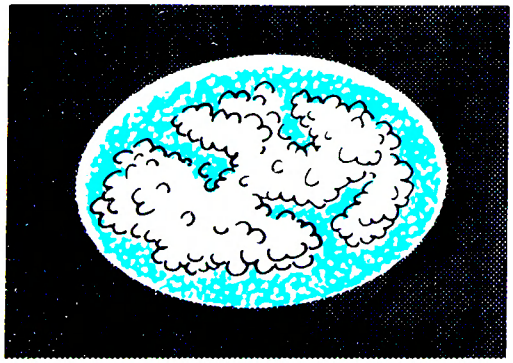


They snip off leaves, and carry them in their jaws to their underground city.

Then they grind the leaves into a paste. They stick the paste on the ceiling or on the floor of their burrows.

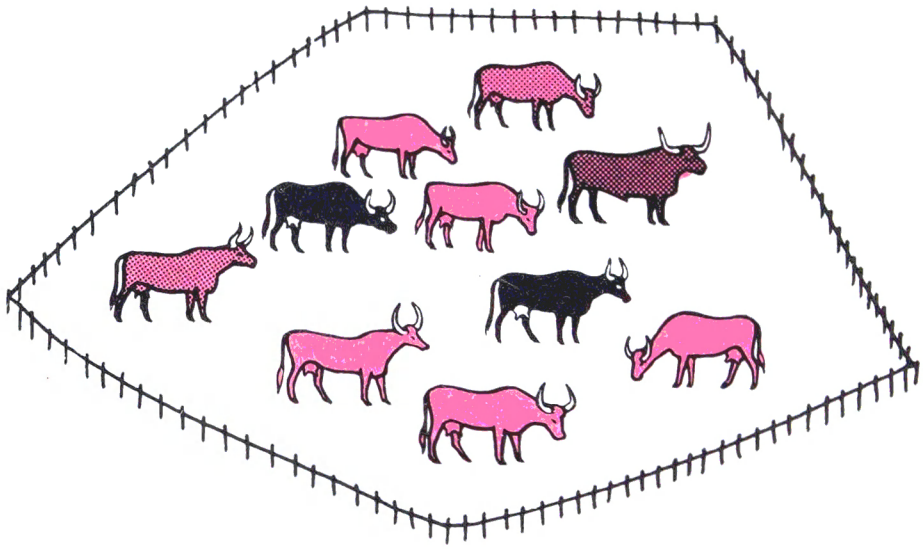


On these blobs of paste they grow tiny fungi.

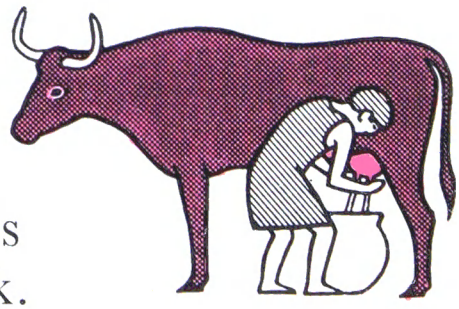


They weed their gardens and add to them a manure made of crushed caterpillars.

Besides learning to grow all sorts of plants man began to keep herds of animals such as goats and sheep.



He gathered wild cattle into herds.
He ate the meat of bulls.

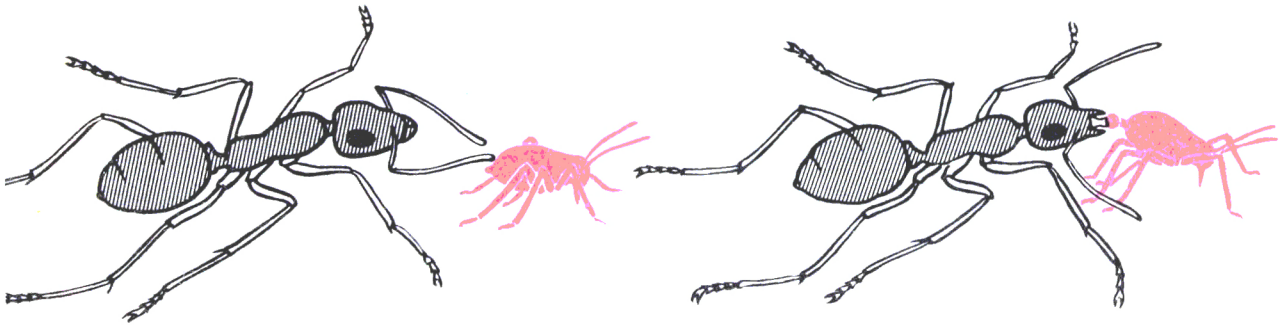


He milked the cows
and drank the milk.

Some ants keep greenflies for the same reason that farmers keep cows.
Ants draw honeydew from greenflies.
Honeydew is as nourishing to ants as milk is to us.

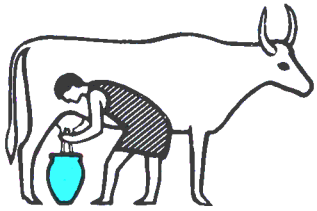
Ants take nearly as much care of their greenflies as they do of their baby ants; they keep the eggs safe in their nest in winter. In summer, they place them on green plants to hatch and feed.

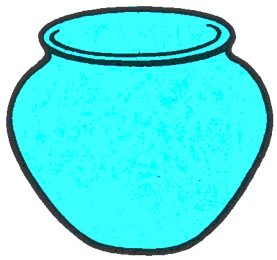
When the ants want the honeydew which the greenflies contain, they stroke their bodies carefully – as a farmer strokes a cow's udder.

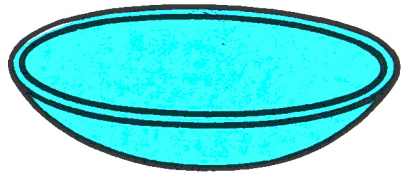


When farmers first began to milk cows, they needed something to hold the milk.

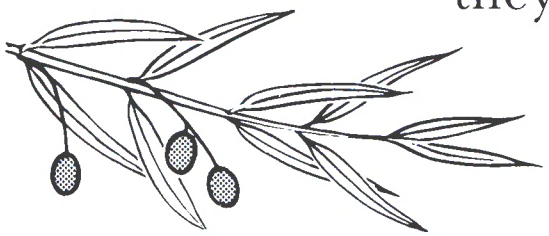
They made pots.

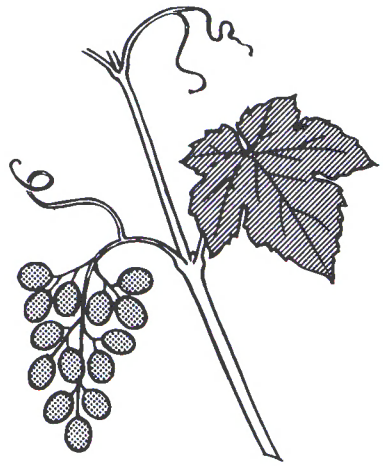


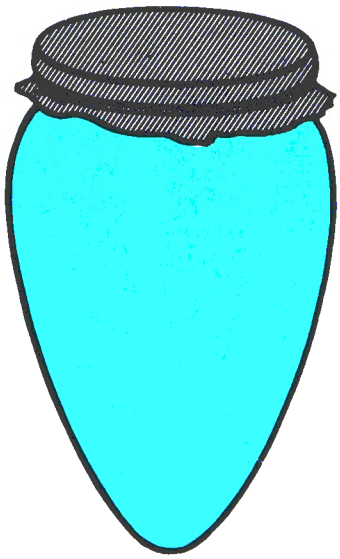




They also used pots to hold the oil which they pressed out of olives . . .

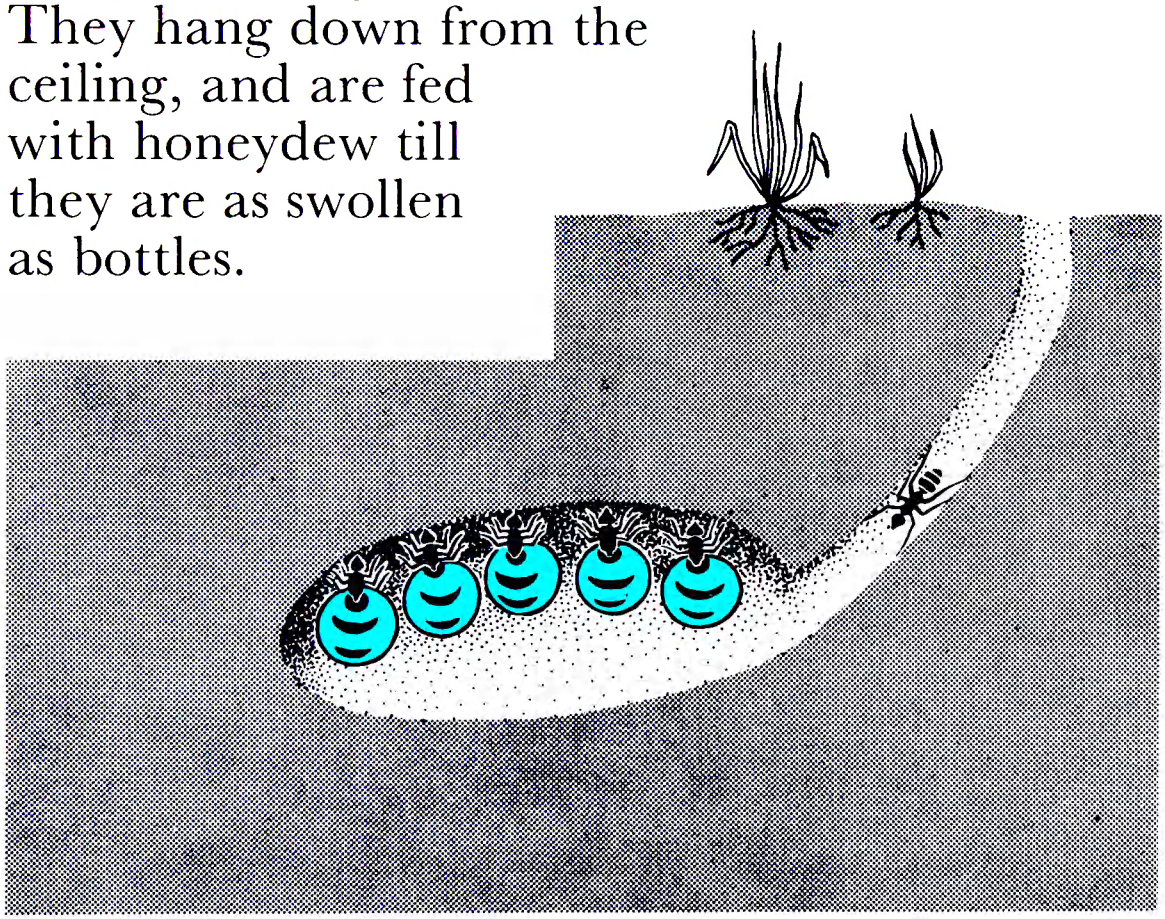




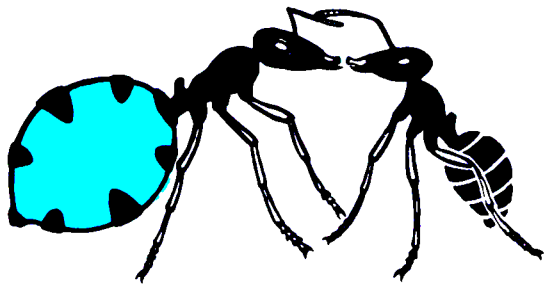


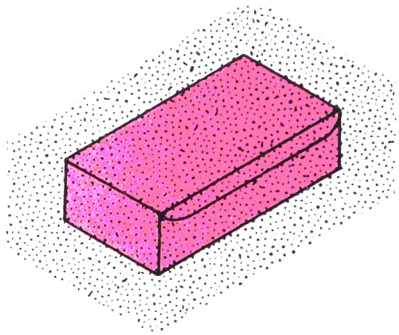
. . . and wine which they made from the juice of grapes. They often sealed their pots.

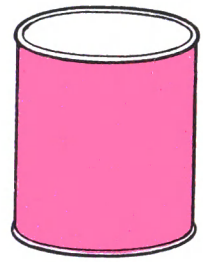
Ants have no containers.
But some ants in the ant city are
obliging enough to act as containers.
They hang down from the
ceiling, and are fed
with honeydew till
they are as swollen
as bottles.



There is no need to
uncork or unplug them!
They give up their
honeydew whenever
they are stroked.

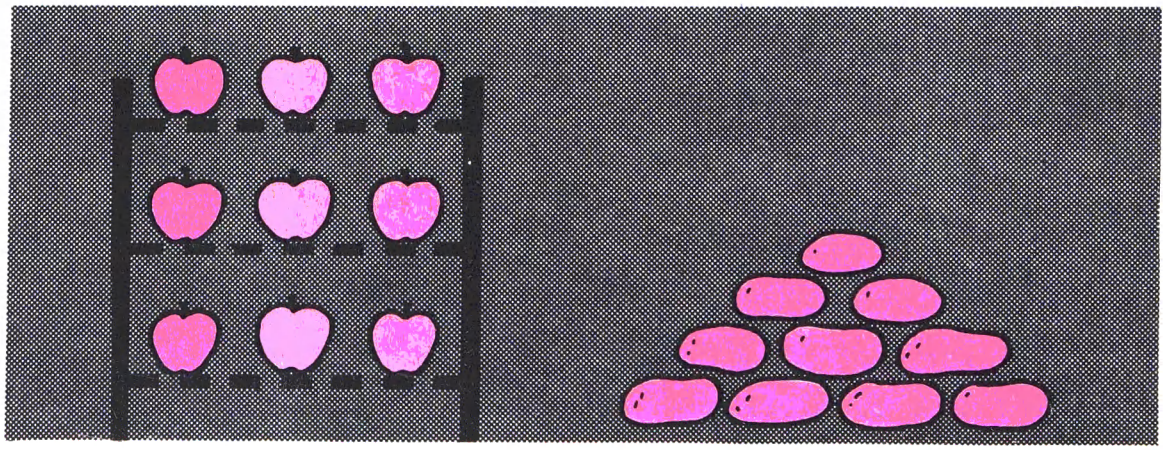






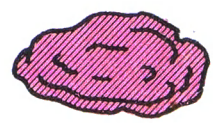
Bottling will keep some foods for a while.
Freezing will keep some foods still longer.
Canning will ensure that they last for years.

Frozen food can travel far.
Bottled fruit can be eaten in winter.

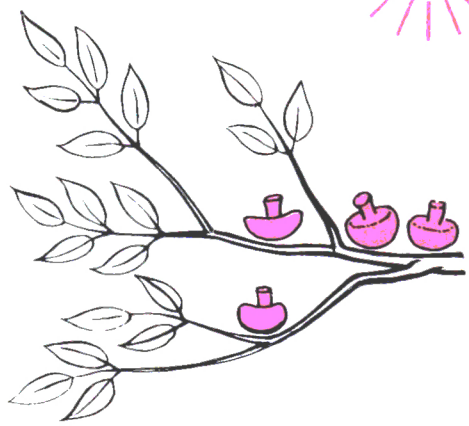


Apples and potatoes can be stored in a cool, dark place for some weeks.

Dried mushrooms and fruit keep for months.

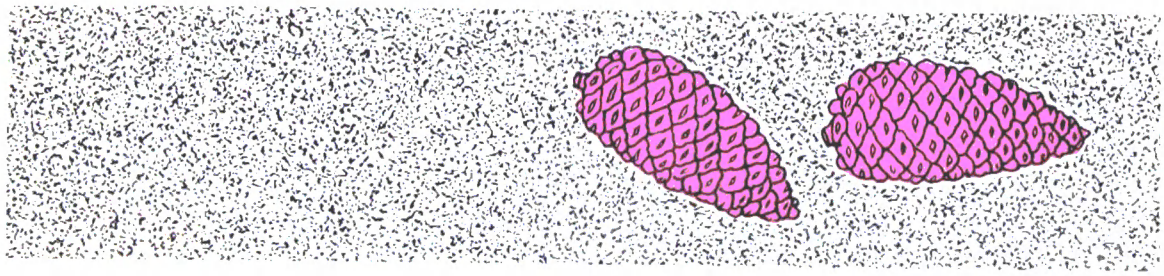


This squirrel is very
fond of mushrooms.
He gathers them in late
summer and then lays them
on branches to dry.

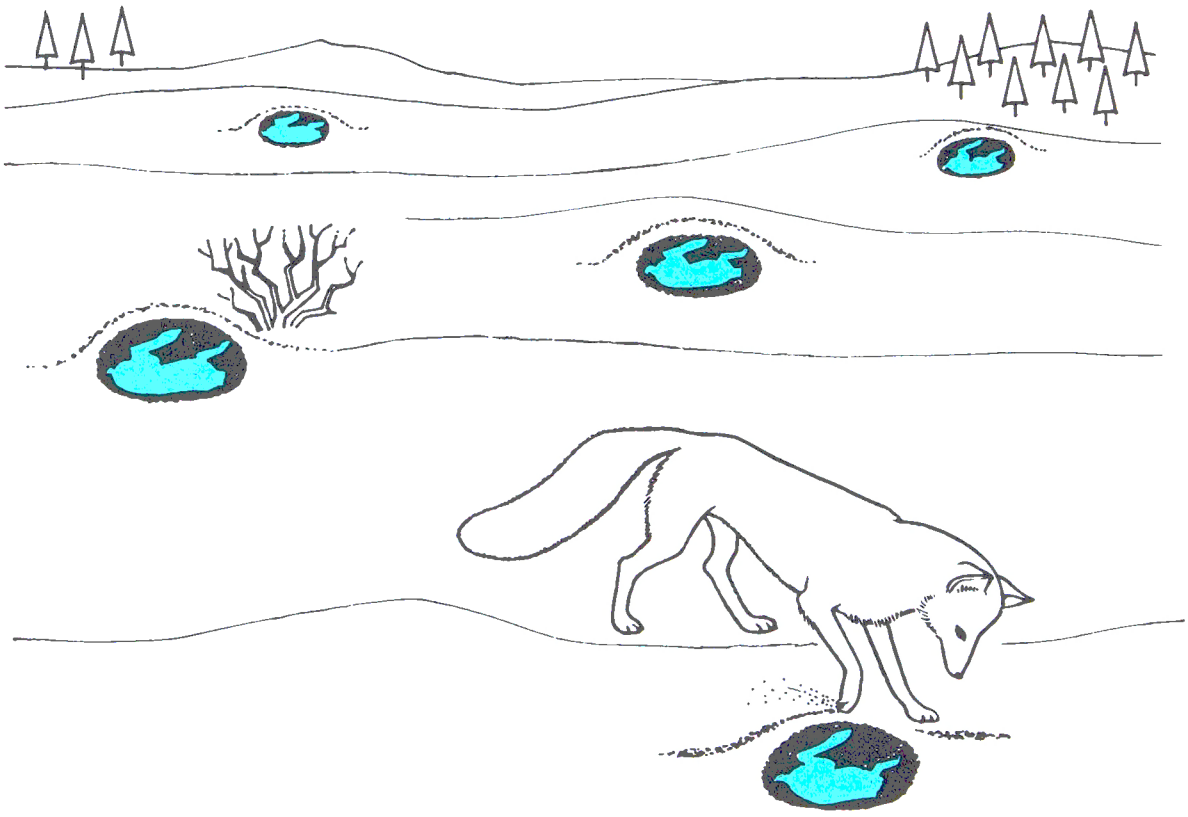


When they are dry he hides them away.
The storehouse is usually a little chamber
dug out of a bone-dry, dead tree-trunk.

He likes green cones too.
He buries *them* in the damp earth,
for they do not need to be dried.
He is certainly a clever little fellow.

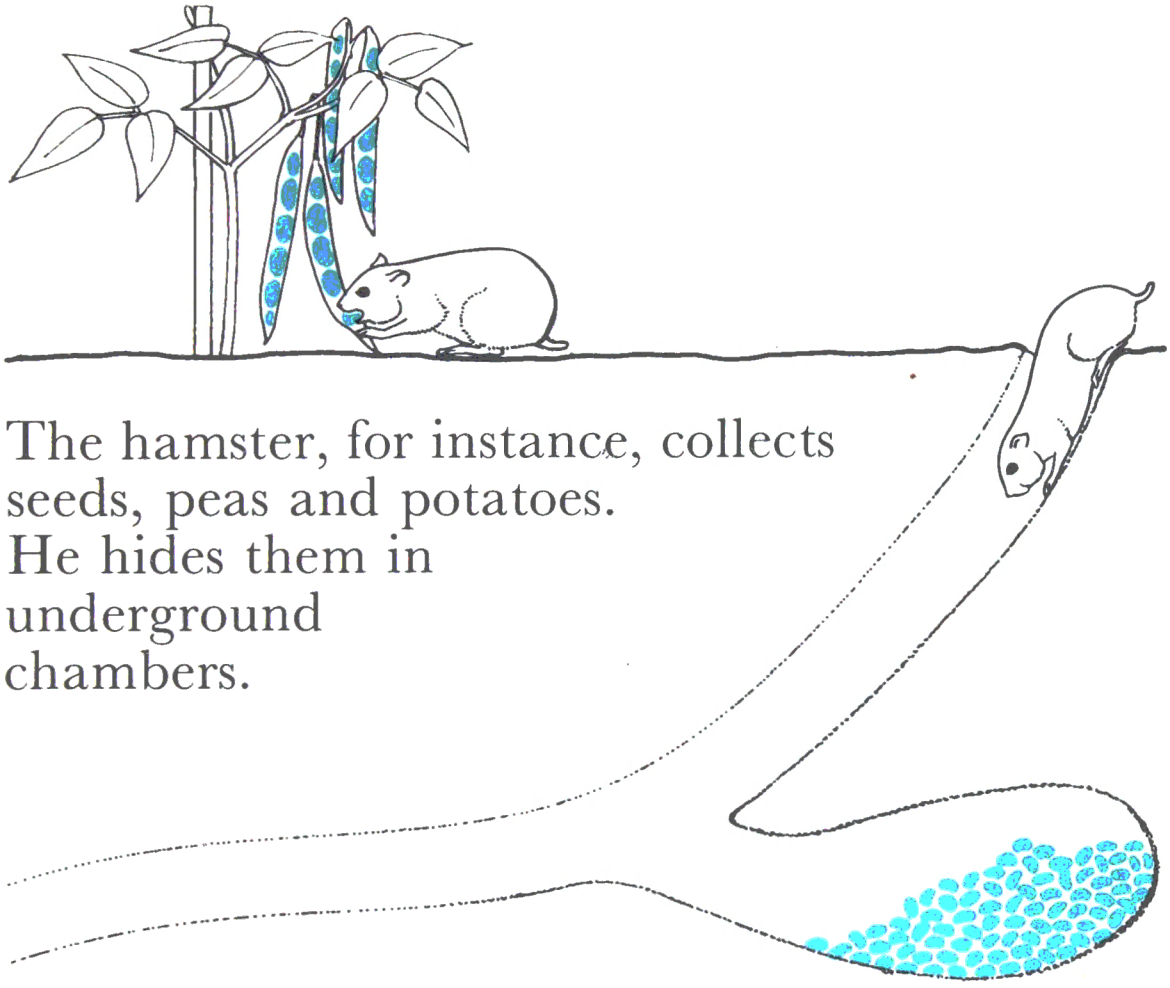


The American grey fox prefers deep-freeze.
When he catches and kills a hare in winter,
he eats some of it and buries the rest.
He covers the hole.
The meat and bone freeze hard.



He need never starve in winter-time when so many animals are sleeping underground. He keeps quite a number of refrigerators, and he knows how to find them again.

The animals which sleep through the winter need no food until they awaken again.

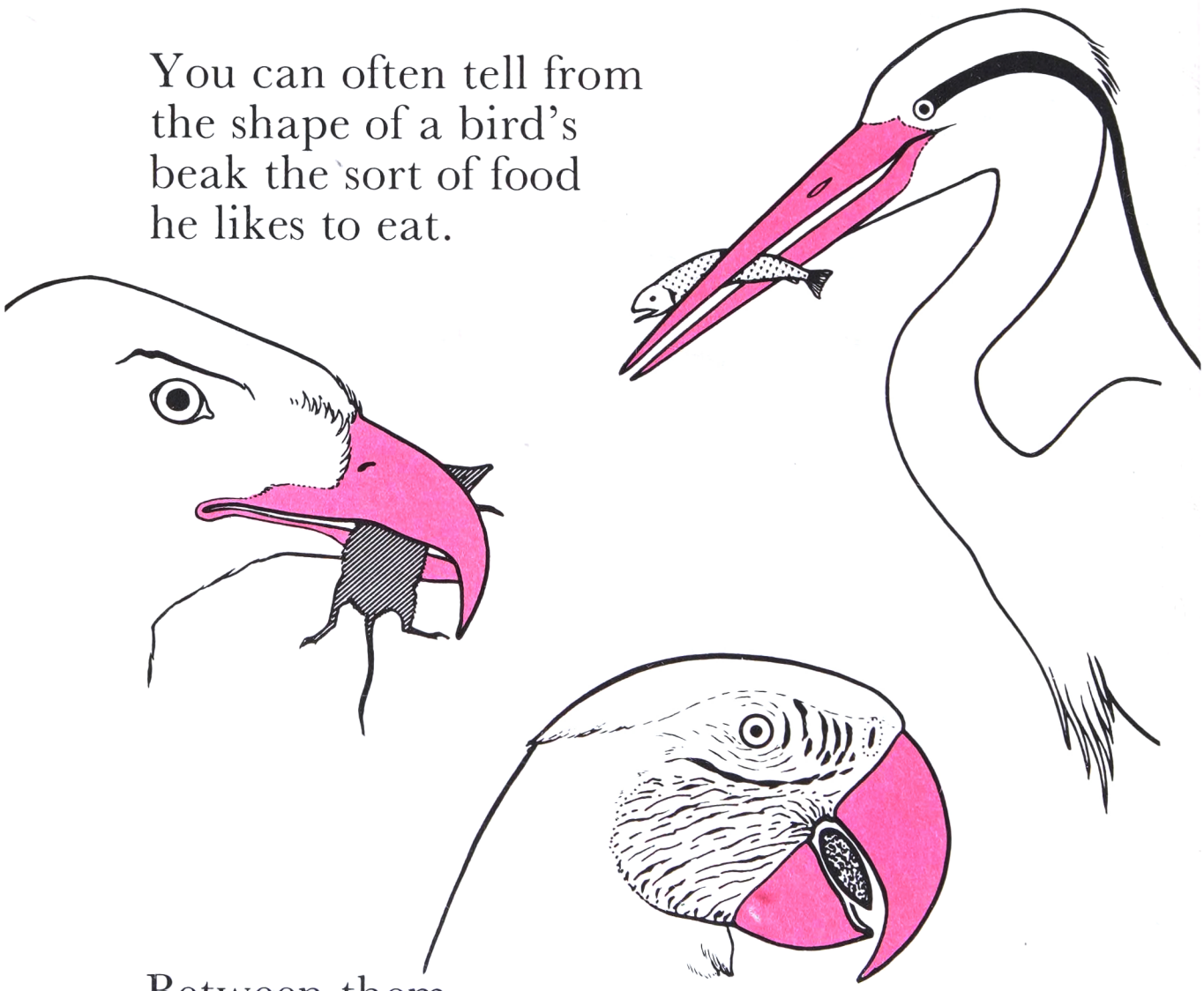


The hamster, for instance, collects seeds, peas and potatoes. He hides them in underground chambers.

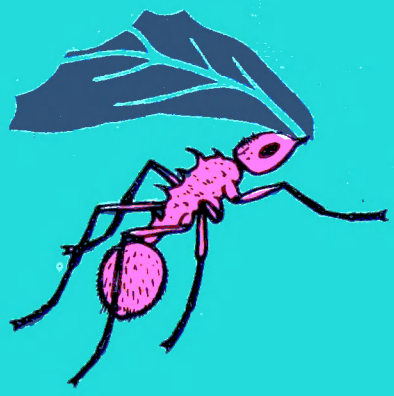
In autumn, he eats and eats and eats and grows fat. He lives on his fat throughout the winter. When he wakes up in spring, lean and hungry, he can finish off what is left in the store.

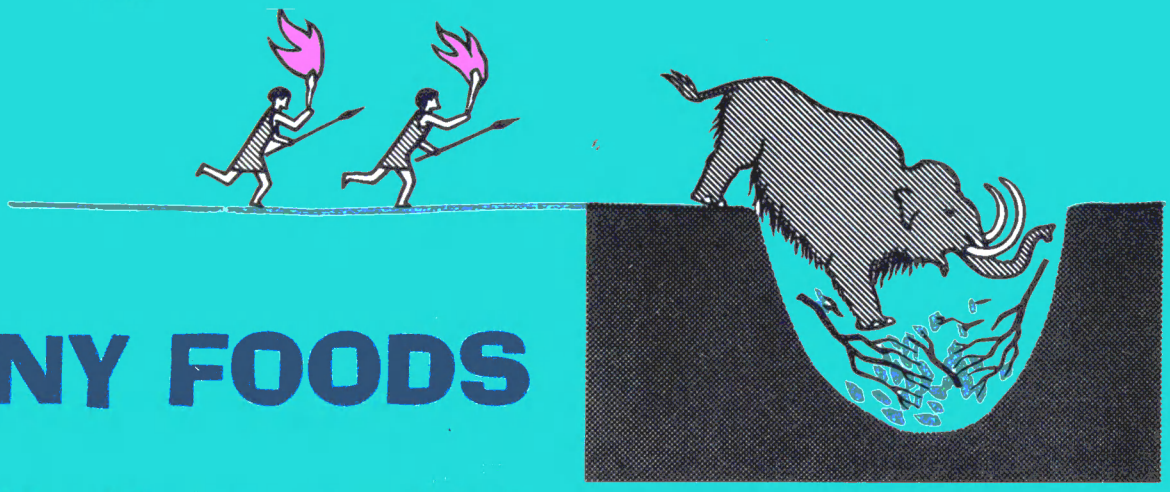
Birds do not preserve food. They fly from place to place to find what they need.

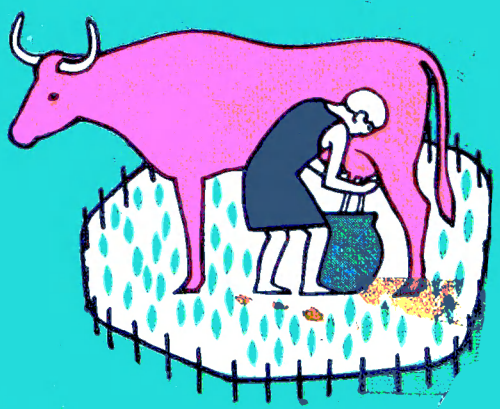
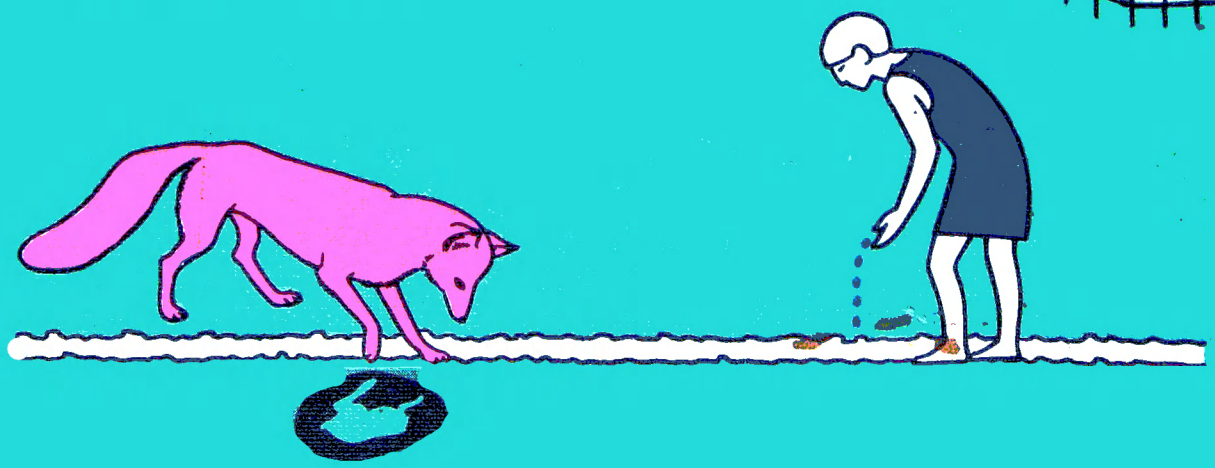
You can often tell from the shape of a bird's beak the sort of food he likes to eat.



Between them,
birds taste every meal in the world – between them, they eat every food that exists.





MANY FOODS

Every living thing must eat — if it is to survive. Animals, insects, plants and humans all have their special ways of collecting, storing and consuming food. In this book, Mrs. Neurath takes young readers into the world of wildlife and shows how important food is for every creature — frogs, fish, anteaters, tigers, snakes — even *toadstools!* The simple text and lively illustrations bring this subject to life and give youngsters food for thought as they compare their own eating habits with those of animals and plants.